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Comments:

I am pleased to have the opportunity to comment on the Draft Management Plan for the Custer Gallatin National Forest. I have resided in Gallatin county for the past 37 years and raised a family during that time. We have benefited from the unique characteristics of the area while hiking, backpacking, and cross-country skiing for all of those years primarily in the Gallatin, Madison, Bridgers, Absaroka Beartooths and Crazies. My family continues to hunt white-tail and mule deer, elk, and antelope as well.

I have witnessed the increased impact of motorized and mechanized travel specifically on trails in our backyard (Bear Canyon, east of Bozeman) and other areas such as the Emerald Lake Trail up Hyalite. As population of the Gallatin explodes in the Bozeman, Big Sky, Livingston areas I realize the importance of protection of the forest from further motorized and mechanized human impact for generations of people to come.

I support further wilderness designation to maximize protection of our unique and diverse lands, wildlife (our rich native species-grizzlies, elk, moose, bighorns and wolverines), plants, and water resources. The Porcupine-Buffalo Horn area must be included in wilderness designation to provide connectivity to Yellowstone National Park via the entire Gallatin Crest. Alternative D appears to most closely align with my conservation ethic.

I am a firm believer in the concept of multiple use, however I truly believe that in this vast national forest there is plenty of acreage for everyone and multiple recreational activities while providing for the most wilderness designation. We are very fortunate that this is so!

I am concerned about the proposed Back Country Area designations as management seems arbitrary and unsubstantial in terms of long term preservation of a healthy, diverse ecosystem.

I thank you for your work to revise and update the CGNF Plan and for consideration of public comments.

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